

# The Times - Dispatch

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## UNITED STATE ACTION UN- ACHIEVED.

There was one act in the final session of the Governors' Conference yesterday that was without parallel or precedent in the history of the nation. Eighteen Governors of sovereign States, in a convocation designed to be representative of all the States, recorded themselves upon a declaration of sentiment. It was the first formal United States action. Who can say that it was not the precursor of unnumbered declarations of both sentiment and action by the States through their chief magistracies? There are three possible forms of governmental action in the structure of our government: separate and independent action by each State in its sovereign capacity; action by all the States as a nation or United States action; and action by the States acting together, though as separate units. This last is United States action.

The concentration of the united wisdom of all upon the problems of each is the purpose of the House of Governors expressed by William George Jordan, the founder of the organization, and the one authority on United States action. There is a field of power in the nation that the several States acting in concert can take by occupation, but which the Federal government can take only by usurpation. To insure to themselves the preservation of their full powers and to protect themselves from the menace of centralization, the States must settle in the twilight zone under their rightful title to prevent the exercise of unqualified sovereignty in that domain by the national government.

This purpose the Governors' Conference has so far almost imperceptibly fulfilled. The fifth conference, which closed here yesterday, differed little from the preceding sessions. The discussion stage has not been passed, the action stage has not been achieved. With a single possible exception, the conference did not propose a uniform law for adoption by the several States. Practically the only benefit attained here was that which is always effected through the interchange of opinions and the outlining of theories. This new place of governmental mechanism has not yet begun to evolve the product that is expected of it. It has not yet spanned the chasm left by the framers of the Constitution between the Federal government and the States. The forty-eight sovereign entities have not yet possessed themselves of the domain that lies before them. State inertia has not been overcome. Uniformity is still an unrealized ideal. Promise has not yet been squared with performance. Action has not replaced inaction.

There have been three causes why the House of Governors has not fully realized its function. First, the attendance has not been what it should have been. Eighty-seven incoming and outgoing Governors ought to have been present at this conference. The membership includes Governors-elect, yet only one was here. There were present just one-half of the Governors in office, while but two ex-Governors were interested enough to attend. In other words, of the eighty-seven possible members, only twenty-five attended. Only a minority of a little more than one-fourth of the total possible membership answered to the roll. The consequent loss to the dignity and to the importance of the conference is obvious.

Second, the topics discussed were not as vital as they might have been. Many topics were sprang over with too little discussion. Concentration upon one or two subjects would have better results. Better the full discussion of one subject than the hasty consideration of half a dozen. It is preferable to examine an issue in all its phases and send the Governors back to their respective States with the draft of a bill that should hold high place in their legislative program, and aid in effecting uniformity in the legislation of the States.

Third, the organization of the conference has been too loose. It has needed the assistance of an intelligent secretary who could do the necessary executive work for the conference in the interval between its sessions. This defect has been remedied in the permanent organization perfected here this week. The secretary should fully inform himself as to the progress in legislation of State interest, and should, by disseminating that information, prove of much assistance in bringing about uniformity and advancement.

The House of Governors has achieved something already, however indefinite and invisible that result may seem. It has vast potentialities. The need of uniform legislation is greater than it was when the body was formed. The popular dissatisfaction with the lack of progressive and enlightened State laws will increase

the demand for United States action. As the people become more informed as to the responsibility that rests upon the States, the House of Governors will more and more realize its function of promoting greater uniformity in State legislation and in attaining greater efficiency in State administration. There is a distinct need for it that nothing else can supply; there is a peculiar field for it that none other should occupy.

## MORE THAN NEUTRALIZED.

The bellicose utterances of Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, German Chancellor, in the Reichstag, warning Russia that Germany would stand by her ally, Austria-Hungary, in the event of the latter's being attacked by Russia, were it considered, more than neutralized and offset by the speech of Herr Kiderlen Waechter, German Foreign Minister, on the same occasion. And logically so.

The Chancellor dealt with a contingency. The Foreign Minister stated a significant fact almost conclusively repugnant to apprehension that the contingency could possibly arise. The one was talking largely for jingo home consumption; the other was addressing himself to Europe, and revealing a situation little less than an absolute assurance that peace would be preserved.

Herr Kiderlen Waechter declared that throughout the Balkan crisis Germany and Great Britain had worked together in the most loyal and confidential spirit, and with "gratifying intimacy." It is no secret that Great Britain has been straining every nerve and exerting every possible influence to prevent the involvement of the powers, or any one of them, in the Balkan war.

Given thus, the German Foreign Minister's declaration is taken to mean that there is an Anglo-German understanding that Great Britain would not support a Russian attack on Germany's ally. That in turn means that there will be no such attack, and that at the last Austria-Hungary, in response to combined German and British pressure, will, in her demands as regards the final Balkan settlement, stop short of provoking such an attack.

## BETTER HOUSING FOR RICHMOND.

Richmond is a city of homes. No where in the land do the virginal virtues and the enduring domestic joys flower into more beautiful living. But are the dwellings in which peace and family affection bloom what they should be? Can the best emotions reach perfection when humans are crowded, noisy, harassed by the pressure of mere numbers, and herded together in conditions that produce disease and vice? If the social qualities that are beyond doubt the greatest treasure of the South are to be preserved, the housing conditions of the people must be made sweet and wholesome.

Three isolated facts bring home the question at this time. For one, the importance attached to the question of better physical surroundings by other communities. In Philadelphia, a conference of municipalities, health departments and social betterment organizations has spent four days discussing the problems of civilized men by civilizing their daily home environment. This attitude in others should wake Richmond to her needs. By actual figures, her population is among the densest per square mile in the United States. The question of tenements and foreign quarters does not yet demand settlement, but other housing problems of equal gravity confront us. We should try to settle them in the spirit that made the city of Cleveland spend \$12,500 for investigation and research in order to pass a proper housing law.

A second fact that calls for partial remedy by better residences is the high death rate among the negro inhabitants of Richmond. The November report of the city Health Department shows that the death rate for negroes is nearly 24 per 1,000. For whites it is only about 12. This discrepancy is largely due to the unhygienic housing conditions in which the negro lives. His death rate from tuberculosis is abnormally large. This is caused by poverty and ignorance in the first place, and, in the second, by congestion, lack of fresh air and sunlight. The poverty and ignorance we may not yet be able to remedy, but with all of Virginia to employ for homes, it is the duty of this community to see that the negro has proper room in which to keep clean and healthy. The real negro problem is not to adjust the sporadic evils of hygiene, but to deal everyday justice to an inferior race.

The third fact that stares Richmond in the face is that some of the terrible results of overcrowding may be avoided by the annexation of such territory as may be needed to give growing room to the population. The workingmen, both white and black, need cheaper homes. This matter of annexation is not merely an economic affair. It is of profound importance in the very heart of our social life. No short-sighted policy of real estate owners nor quibbling over taxes or boundary lines can obscure the prime need for more room to provide the opportunity for the finest flowering of what makes all society worth while—the simple and tender home-loving pleasures.

## BUSINESS AND DEMOCRATIC SEC- CESS.

The Fourth National Bank of New York City, as a result of inquiries made to leaders in the principal branches of trade and industry, states that business is better today than it has been at any other time during the present year. In its usual monthly letter to its patrons, this financial institution gives an encouraging an-

alysis of existing conditions, as follows:

"The election had very little influence upon business conditions, and while there has been a great deal of talk about the possible unsetting of the tariff, the fact is that scarcely any interference of that sort has been reflected. One reason for this is that many of the largest industrial corporations have so arranged their affairs as to make it possible for them to do much lower tariff schedules than those now in force. This preliminary arrangement is natural for the reason that there has been almost constant discussion for a year or more respecting the advisability of reducing the present duties."

"The outlook for an active holiday trade, with a volume of sales very much in excess of those reported last year of the year before, is exceedingly bright. This is anticipated everywhere as a result of the active demand for labor, the relatively high wages, and the confidence of the people as to the business outlook. The savings banks have been gaining deposits for some time and, except in isolated cases, are no longer subjected to the withdrawals of money by wage earners and others who have had to utilize a portion of their savings to meet living expenses. There is to-day virtually no unemployed class in the United States; and in certain sections of the West there exists an actual shortage of labor."

These statements are not restricted to basic industries, such as iron and steel manufacturing. In which the expansion of the past few months has been unparalleled, but are applicable to industrial and trade conditions as a whole. In the West the outlook is especially good. The large crops of this year have trebled the purchasing power of many Western communities with resultant advantage to mercantile and manufacturing establishments and the railroads.

## THE MARRIAGE OF NAZIMOVA.

The marriages of actors are always interesting. How they will mix the mimic life and the real one, keep both temper and temperament, and adjust the claims of art and public to the duties of home and mate is like an experiment in chemistry that may result in generating heat and light for service or produce a devastating explosion. Even more fascinating are the potentialities for tragedy in the marriage of a genius like Nazimova to her leading man. She has founded her art on the subtle modern plays of marital life. The eternal triangle has been her stage life. She has slipped into the skins of scores of the neurotic heroines of our later stage. The creations of Ibsen, Sudermann, d'Annunzio and the French psychological dramatists have been vehicles for her mimetic skill. What will she do now as a plain woman weaving her own life pattern?

Possibly the study of enough failures in matrimony has taught her the art of succeeding. Being a horrible example on the stage may make her a shining model in the home. In tracing the pitiful weaknesses of her creations to their true depths, she may have achieved a serene wisdom that will avoid all the pitfalls of nerves and conscience and body that beset the highly strung. The purification that the ancient philosopher declared came from viewing tragedy has perhaps come to her own soul. Then, again, she may be quite a different kind of creature from them, and tread, like all other mates, the path that is veiled and dim, and that must be traversed to be known.

Or suppose she gets restless because the humdrum of her own experience holds none of the beautiful misery she has portrayed in fictitious homes? She may be tempted to start something. Ennui is often enough the third point of the triangle. She may want excitement, a situation, a quick curtain, or a new part. Remembering bitter renunciations and agonies of spiritual war, she may regret that matrimony is not so bad as the decadent authors would have us believe. Her own art may make her an actor in a play where the curtain never falls. Probably, however, this is speculation. She will certainly be a woman—which is complex enough without artifice. The answer doubtless resides in what kind of a leading man she has married.

## THE CHEW VS. THE SMOKE.

Is it better to chew tobacco or to smoke it? That is an issue upon which silence must be maintained, as no plank relating to it can be found in the Progressive party platform. Chewing tobacco is certainly sanctioned by all good Democrats, and the corn-cob pipe has been the symbol of the party ever since old Andy Jackson lit his in the White House parlor.

James Williamson, an Ohio camp cook, is a witness for the contention that it is better to take a "chaw" than to smoke. His experience is most comforting to the antitobaccoists. He was taking a short cut through the dense woods to his camp. He came upon a huge bear unexpectedly, and, since he was unarmed, he tried to run. The bear soon overtook him. Then it hugged Williamson and prepared to serve him up. Williamson, watching his chance, spat a mouthful of tobacco juice into the bear's eye, and the bear ran rapidly back into the forest.

The moral is simple. When in a "chaw" country, "chaw." Tobacco juice in his eye will make even a bull moose take to the tall timber.

The man out West who is complaining because he has been sentenced to prison for 120 years will probably find things much changed when he gets out.

At last we have a message from a departed spirit—President Taft.

Only one thing could have added to the spectacularity of the Governors' conference. Its initials are T. R.

The recipe that will most influence the Christmas menu is the famous high cost of living.

## On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

### Caught on the Fly.

The Nicaraguans have promised to be good, but a Nicaraguan's idea of being good would land him in jail anywhere in the United States.

The steel trust reports an era of great prosperity. It certainly takes a trust to find out when prosperity is lurking around.

Peter Loti says he is pleased with the freshness of American women. Let it be hoped he means what he ought to mean.

While the Greeks are calling for volunteers, why do the members of the Greek letter fraternities hang back?

General Grant's picture will be on the \$10,000 bills, but those designing to familiarize themselves with the general's features can buy a lithograph much cheaper than that.

Joe Cannon's old auto has been sold in Washington for \$800. All his machines seem to have gone to the bad.

New York policeman has been shot by mistake for a hold-up man. Rather a natural mistake, after all.

The trouble with these Mexican revolutions is that they are not revolving in the same direction.

Turkey is up against four kings, and Turkey holds a punk hand to bluff on.

Three alfalfa crops in California this year, meaning real alfalfa, not whiskers.

### From the Hickeyville Clarion.

Hiram Jenks, our landscape painter, ain't much on painting animals. He says it is hard to paint a hog, for you can't get the critter to stand still long enough. Besides, the paint fills up the pores in the hog's skin so he can't sweat. A dog bit Hank Tamos the other day, and now the dog is liable to die from the rabbits super-induced by acute alcoholism. The Clarion is closed to-day, for the editor is having his pants pressed down to the tailor's shop.

Rev. Hanks said he was going to exchange pulpits with the preacher over to West Hickeyville last Sunday, but everybody that went to church was fooled, as the same old pulpit was there. Preachers can joke once in while. But there is one consolation: The West Hickeyville fellers was just as badly fooled as we was. Miss Pansy Tibbitts sent down to the city for some quinine and they sent it in capsules. She says she don't like to get quinine that way, as it took too long to shake the dumb things before taking 'em. Folks all thought she was cat-in' peanuts.

The other night, when they had company to dinner, Hod Peters's wife told him that it wasn't etiquette to set down to the table in his shirt sleeves, but Hod said he'd be dim-witted if he was going to take his shirt off, etiquette or no etiquette.

The only way to get the laugh on a magazine editor is to tear up your manuscript and throw it in the fire before sending it.

Many a successful poet got his start writing epithets for tombstones.

Ansel Jinkney, our tonorial artist and leader of the band and orchestra, busted the G string on his violin the other day, and says there will be no more music in this burg until he runs across a stray cat somewhere.

Hiram Huggins has got a new cat mobile, which he calls a "runabout." It will run about forty rods, and then they have to get out and fix it.

### The Bore.

He stands on one foot for a while, then stands upon the other. And stares at you as though you were indeed, his long-lost brother.

A hint to him is naught but Greek. He always fails to heed it. And sticks around and takes your time.

Just when you sorely need it. He cuts in with a word or two. And never fails to blunder.

Right in upon your train of thought. And knock it all to thunder.

When putting salt upon the tail of some fleet inspiration, you're interrupted by his harsh Unwelcome exclamation: About the weather we have had, or else about the pennant.

Until you feel as though you would become a burghouse tenant. He is concerned about your health. And says you're looking sickly. And if you are not sick at all, He makes you so right quickly.

He never has a thing to do. And no one ever saw him yet. When he was in a hurry. He has no business of his own. That needs attention badly. And so he just attends to yours. And does it very gladly.

There are but ten commandments now. But I would have eleven. The last would be "Thou shalt never go to heaven."

## Voice of the People

### Letter From Mr. Matthews.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—I wish to thank The Times-Dispatch for its very fair and manly correction of the article which caused our complaint, and I think I voice the sentiment of every member of the Builders' Exchange.

The owners of The Times-Dispatch have at all times been foremost in the promotion of the city's interest, and we feel that they would not under any

## Abe Martin



Th' towns along th' Bulgarian frontier sound like a wine list. Few things make more noise than steppin' on a farmer's toe.

## LEARNING TO DANCE THE TANGO ARGENTINO.

By John T. McCutcheon.

(Copyright, 1912, By John T. McCutcheon.)



circumstances willfully hurt the interest of any man or body of men.

The builders of Richmond invite competition, but we do think that on public work, which we are taxed to help pay for and taxed to upkeep, the local architects and builders should have preference.

Yours very truly,  
H. L. MATTHEWS.  
Richmond, December 6

### Letter From Builders.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—I am directed by the Builders' Exchange of the city of Richmond to express to you the sincere appreciation of its officers and members for the prompt and courteous manner in which you corrected a statement published in your paper of December 5, 1912.

Very truly yours,  
THE BUILDERS' EXCHANGE OF RICHMOND.  
J. C. DREVER, Secretary.

### A Bouquet for Governor Bleas.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—I cannot refrain from expressing through your columns my high appreciation for the bold and manly utterances of South Carolina's chief executive at the Conference of Governors

held in Richmond, clearly expressing his views relative to certain Southern criminal offenses, and I feel sure that his bold yet conservative statement will greatly endear him in the hearts of every true Southerner, and South Carolina should be proud of claiming as her son Coleman Livingston Bleas.

And if we only had a few more Southern Governors like Cole Bleas, our wives, sisters and daughters would soon be exempt from the criminal assaults of the negro fiend, and our Southern States would have fewer long drawn out trials of the black criminal, being guarded by our white military companies from meeting the well deserved fate for committing the most heinous crime ever conceived in the brain of God's human creation. I was living in the beautiful little State of South Carolina when Governor Bleas was running for re-election, and although his political enemies attempted to defeat him by trumped up and false charges, he conducted his campaign in the same fearless, yet gentlemanly manner as he did when he expressed his views on the proper handling of violators of our moral and social laws, and South Carolina showed her appreciation of her distinguished son

by again bestowing upon him the highest honor in her power.

O. M. SUTTON.

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